



THE RICOCHET

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<http://www.conservation.state.mo.us/areas/ranges/lakecity>



Range News

It's hard to believe that another year has come to an end. This past year, the range has seen some major changes. In this month *Ricochet* we would like to sight some of the changes the range has experienced in the hope of improving service to our customers, you the Shooters.

One of the biggest changes is the reorganization within Missouri Department of Conservation, in which all five manned shooting ranges within the State were transferred from Protection Division to outreach and Education Division. Now that the ranges are back under the direction of Outreach and Education Division, we have increased the number of programs or seminars we offer to the public. By broadening our program based we hope to reach a larger audience within the community and continue to improve on our existing programs. For more information on our 2004 program calendar you can call the range at 229-4448 or check our website.

Another change that has been made was with the shooters in minded. In the past, the range hours for public shooting were Thursday – Sunday. Due to public input this past July we extended our public range days and are now open Wednesday – Sunday. The extra day has been well received by the shooters in the region. Since September, Wednesdays have been very busy at the range.

Several repairs of the range facilities and equipment, such as

replacement of the range outside lighting for security, repair/repainting of range shooting benches and refurbishment of trap machines, has greatly enhanced the facility.

As you can see, 2003 has been a year of change for us at MDC. The New Year promises to bring more of the same in hopes of better serving our customers, the shooting public. Good Shooting.

Tips to Cleaning Your In-Line Muzzleloader

The month of December has come again at Lake City Range. During December, hunters all across Missouri prepare for Muzzleloader season. Some hunters ask themselves the question, “did I clean my muzzleloader from last year?”

Hopefully, the answer to that question is yes! Muzzleloading by nature is dirty business. I recently viewed a rifle that had not been cleaned from the previous year; the rifling inside of the gun was virtually worn down because of all the surface rust inside the barrel. After extensive cleaning, the firearm never shot the same. The morale of the story is you must clean your muzzleloader after every shot! When cleaning your muzzleloader, you must take the breech plug or nipple out of the gun. After removing the breech plug, clean it with an old toothbrush and soak it in a hot water solution. At this point, you can now clean the barrel and action of your gun. I suggest using Thompson

Centers Number 13 bore cleaner for this job. The Number 13 cleaner is relatively inexpensive, and it cleans the bore well. After the bore is cleaned, run a dry patch down the barrel to dry out any excess moisture. When reassembling the gun, make sure each component is completely clean of powder residue. Before putting the breech plug back into the gun, use a pipe cleaner to clean out the hole; make sure you put some anti-seize lubricant on the threads, so the breech plug will come out a lot easier when you clean it. After you've done all of this, your gun should be ready to shoot again. Muzzleloading is messy and tedious work, but isn't that what we like about? Be safe and good hunting!

Are Magnums Worth The Recoil

If you are a duck or turkey hunter you know that the only shot shell to use is a "magnum" shell. Right? Well you might be surprised to know that what you are paying for may not be what you are getting.

When hunters think of a "magnum" they usually relate the term to mean "more knock down power and higher velocity". In rifle cartridges, this statement is closer to the true than in shot shells. For example, a 300 Weatherby Magnum has a greater powder capacity than does the .30-06 Springfield and will easily deliver that extra range and knock down power. However, in a shot shell the term "magnum" means greater density in shot pattern and not necessarily greater range.

As a duck hunter, we know that steel shot is inferior to lead in retaining energy. It must be driven at a high velocity to get the down range killing effect we want. Manufacturers of shot shells also know the same thing. To get the velocity needed shot payloads are

2 3/4-inch shell with 1 1/2 oz. of BB lead shot has a velocity of 1260 feet per second. A 12 gauge 3 inch shell with 1 1/8 oz of BB steel shot has a velocity of 1550 (Taylor, M. John, American Hunter, Dec. 2003, pg.45). Even with this variation in velocity between the two shot shells the lead still has a significant down range energy advantage over the steel.

Another disadvantage with the magnum shot shells is recoil. As with any magnum comes an increase in recoil, which can add to an increase in missing those ducks. It has been proven that many people who shoot magnum shells are not consistent in their shooting abilities. In short, they anticipate the recoil and flinch before the shot leaves the barrel. This is especially true with the "mega-magnums" or the 3 1/2 inch 12 gauge shells. Remember to be able to take your ducks you must be able to hit them with some kind of consistency. This leads us back to the hunting basics. Get the birds! No type of shell or shot size will make up for poor shooting skills.

What is the advantage of 3 inch and 3 1/2 magnums? Well, you will gain greater velocity over the 2 3/4-inch high power shells but with a modest payload. The recoil of the 3 1/2 inch shells are not worth the small energy advantage gained down range.

In summary, there are better non-toxic shot out there than steel, such as, bismuth and Hevi-shot (tungsten/iron). Both are as good as lead shot or better for retaining down range energy. The problem is that these new shot shells are quite expensive, too expensive for shooting ducks. Bottom line, if you are like me and choose to stick with the steel shot, you have to pick your shots carefully and shoot the ducks within 30-35 yards.

Supersize That Deer

What is the future of Deer hunting in the United States? In the last six months, I have read several articles talking about "How to find that Pope and Young deer" or "How hunter Bob shot his ten point buck which scored a 185 3/8 in Boone and Crocket". So why should we be worried about the future of hunting?

It seems every hunting magazine and television show is focused on that "monster buck". I realize that it sells magazines and improves TV ratings. What kind of impression does it leave on the average deer hunter? In years past, I remember when hunters who were lucky enough to take a deer were elated at whatever they harvested. What we hear today from people is how and where they can take a Boone and Crocket trophy. We have come to know this type of hunter as a "head hunter". They are focusing on the possibility of a wall hanger and not necessarily on the tradition of hunting or management.

Recently, I was fortunate to give an orientation for a managed hunt here in the area. A managed hunt is simply a hunt sponsored by Missouri Department of Conservation and other organizations, to reduce the deer population in urban and rural areas. Either sex could be harvested at this hunt. I was very surprised by the hunter's attitude towards the hunt. With their mind set on that harvesting the next state record buck, not many deer were taken during that managed hunt, therefore falling short of achieving its goal.

In this time of "supersizing" everything, we need to focus on why we hunt. Each person has their own personal reason for hunting. Just don't forget about the important reason for hunting, resource management!

Calendar of Events

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| December 11 | Map Reading Class
Lake City Range |
| December 13 | Hunter Education Class
Lake City Range |
| December 14 | Open House at Range
Lake City Range |
| December 16 | Muzzle Loader Class
Burr Oak Woods
Nature Center |
| December 25 | CHRISTMAS
Range Closed |
| January 20 | Hide Tanning
Lake City Range |
| January 24 | Hunter Education Class
Lake City Range |
| January 24 | Hunter Education Class
Lake City Range |
| January 24 | Fly Fishing Class
Burr Oak Woods
Nature Center |
| February 7 | Wood Carving Class
Lake City Range |
| February 10 | Beginning Fly Tying
Burr Oak Woods |
| February 17 | Beginning Fly Tying
Burr Oak Woods
(Part TWO) |
| February 18 | Antler Measuring
Lake City Range |
| February 21 | Fishing Tied Flies
Burr Oak Woods |
| February 25 | Beginning Wood Carving
Lake City Range |